



Development Foundation

September 2, 2020

**VIA U.S. MAIL AND EMAIL**

State of North Dakota  
Office of the Attorney General  
600 E. Boulevard Ave Dept. 125  
Bismarck, ND 58501



**Re: MINOT STATE UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION– Incident Notification**

Dear Sir or Madam:

Minot State University Development Foundation uses a Blackbaud application, and Blackbaud recently experienced an incident impacting that application. Minot State University Development Foundation was one of many schools, colleges, and nonprofits that were a part of this incident. Minot State University Development Foundation's investigation is ongoing and this notification will be supplemented with any new or significant facts or findings subsequent to this submission, if any. This breach may affect the security of personal information for 12,317 North Dakota residents.

On July 16, Blackbaud notified Minot State University Development Foundation of a security incident affecting educational institutions and other nonprofits across the United States. Blackbaud reported to Minot State University Development Foundation that Blackbaud identified an attempted ransomware attack in progress on May 20, 2020. Blackbaud informed Minot State University Development Foundation that they stopped the ransomware attack with the help of forensics experts and law enforcement, and that they prevented the cybercriminal from blocking or accessing encrypted files that contain sensitive data. Blackbaud engaged forensic experts to assist in their internal investigation. That investigation concluded that the cybercriminal removed data from Blackbaud's systems intermittently between February 7, 2020 and May 20, 2020. A backup file containing certain information was removed by the cybercriminal. According to Blackbaud, they paid the cybercriminal to ensure that the backup file was permanently destroyed.

Minot State University Development Foundation was informed by Blackbaud that it is possible the cybercriminal may have gained access to the North Dakota residents' names and dates of birth. The cybercriminal did not access financial account information or credit card account information because Minot State University Development Foundation does not maintain this information.

Minot State University Development Foundation has no indication that any of the information has been misused. Nevertheless, out of an abundance of caution, Minot State

State of North Dakota  
Office of the Attorney General  
September 2, 2020  
Page 2

incident and to explain the steps that it is taking to help safeguard the affected residents against identity fraud. Minot State University Development Foundation is providing the affected residents with written notification of this incident commencing on or about August 31, 2020 in substantially the same form as the letter attached hereto. Minot State University Development Foundation is advising the affected residents about obtaining free credit reports.

At Minot State University's Development Foundation, protecting the privacy of personal information is a top priority. Minot State University Development Foundation is committed to maintaining the privacy of personal information in its possession and has taken many precautions to safeguard it. Minot State University Development Foundation continually evaluates and modifies its practices and internal controls (and those of its third party service providers) to enhance the security and privacy of personal information.

Should you have any questions regarding this notification, please contact me at 701-858-3399 or [foundation@minotstateu.edu](mailto:foundation@minotstateu.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Hedberg".

Rick Hedberg  
Executive Director  
Minot State University  
Development Foundation

Encl.



## Development Foundation

August 28, 2020

We are writing to let you know of a data security incident at a third-party service provider that may have involved some of your personal information. The Minot State University Development Foundation ("MSUDF") takes the protection and proper use of your information very seriously; therefore, we are contacting you to explain the incident and measures taken to protect your information. While we do not believe that this incident is reasonably likely to subject you to a risk of harm, we are providing you with this notice in an abundance of caution and transparency.

### What Happened?

We were recently notified by one of our vendors, Blackbaud Inc., of a security incident in which Blackbaud experienced a ransomware attack. However, prior to being locked out, the cybercriminals removed backup files from Blackbaud's platform, which hosted data for numerous colleges, universities, health care organizations, foundations, and other non-profit organizations around the world, including MSUDF. Blackbaud believes the breach occurred between February and May 2020. Blackbaud discovered the incident in May, conducted an investigation, and notified MSUDF on July 16, 2020.

### What Information Was Involved?

After a careful review, we have determined that the information removed by the threat actor may have contained some of your information, which is limited to your name, address and/or date of birth. **Please be assured that we do NOT store bank account or credit and debit card information, and therefore none of this information was part of the incident. Blackbaud has confirmed that the investigation found that no encrypted information, such as Social Security numbers, was accessible.** Also, Blackbaud worked with law enforcement and third-party experts and informed us that they paid the threat actor.

### What Can You Do?

**At this time, based on the information we have received from Blackbaud, we have no reason to believe that any data will be misused, disseminated, or otherwise made publicly available. Blackbaud indicates that it has hired a third-party team of experts, including a team of forensics accountants, to continue monitoring for any such activity.** Unfortunately, these ransomware attacks are becoming more and more common. As a best practice in today's world of cybercrime, we recommend that you remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity or suspected identity theft to the proper law enforcement authorities. For more information on this incident, please visit [www.MinotStateU.edu/Blackbaud](http://www.MinotStateU.edu/Blackbaud).

### For More Information

We remain fully committed to maintaining the privacy of personal information in our possession and have taken many precautions to safeguard it. We sincerely regret any inconvenience this incident may cause you. Should you have any further questions or concerns regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the MSUDF at [foundation@MinotStateU.edu](mailto:foundation@MinotStateU.edu) or by calling 701-858-3399.

Thank you for being an important part of the Minot State University family. We hope you, your friends and family are safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Rick Hedberg, Executive Director  
Minot State University Development Foundation